

THE DAYSPRING.

"The dayspring from on high hath visited us."

OLD SERIES.
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NELLIE AND WILLIE.

ONE afternoon, when Mrs. Johnson was going out to see some friends, she told her two children, Nellie and Willie, that they must amuse themselves as best they could while she was gone. She charged them to be good children, and to be sure that they did no mischief.

"Tell us what to play, mother," said Nellie; "you know we will be good if we only have something pretty to play."

"Why not cut out some paper dolls as you did the other day when I went out?" said Mrs. Johnson.

"Yes," said Nellie, "that will be nice fun, and it will keep us busy all the while you are gone."

Mrs. Johnson then gave Nellie some stiff white paper and a pair of scissors, and went out for an hour or two, leaving no one in the house with the children but Bridget, who was busy in the kitchen. Nellie, took the paper and scissors and made doll after doll, greatly to the amusement of herself and her little brother. Do you see how earnestly they are looking at the one she has just made? How nice it is for children to play in this way; how much better than to quarrel as to what they shall play and how they shall play, as some children do!

For The Dayspring.

THE WAY TO DO IT.

BY ELLEN F. LEONARD.

A LITTLE boy was walking to town,
And what do you think he did?
He simply lifted one foot up,
While he put the other one down!

He never thought about why or where,
But kept his mind in advance,
And remembered the errand he was to do,
Till the first he knew he was there.

He saw such pleasant things by the way, —
As all of us may if we will, —
That while he still held his errand in mind,
His walk was a long happy play.

THE CROSS BABY.

So many descriptions of the picture of the Cross Baby have been sent us by our little readers that we cannot publish all. The three that follow seem to us the best:—

Nellie says: "This little boy lives in the country, and has every thing to make him happy; but I am sorry to say he has a very bad temper, and, because his kind nurse would not allow him to put his fingers in his milk, he has tipped his cup over. How angry he looks! I hope the next time I see him he will have a sunny smile. I wonder if the nurse has gone to get him more milk. His mamma will feel very sorry when she finds how naughty her little boy has been."

Ella says: "Little Freddie's mother has seated him at the table and placed before him his supper, consisting of a bowl of bread-and-milk. Freddie has accidentally overturned the bowl, and is crying for the loss of his supper. If I were present I would try to pacify him by repeating the

old saying, 'It is useless to cry for spilt milk.'"

Lillie says: "I think this little boy's name is Willie, and his mother has just put him into his little chair to eat his breakfast of bread-and-milk. I suppose he was trying to get both hands and his spoon all together into his bowl, as most little children do, when in some way he tipped it over, and thus lost his breakfast. He is crying very loud, and his mother or nurse will come and give him some more. He will be more careful after this, I hope, and never lose his breakfast again in that way. He has very chubby arms, and I think he would be quite pretty if he would laugh instead of cry. Perhaps he will after he has had some more breakfast. I wish I had a little brother."

For The Dayspring.

GERTRUDE'S DREAM.

BY LOUISE L. BELL.

WOULD you like to have me tell you a story, Uncle Frank? Well then, I will. It's all about a dream I had.

You don't look easy in that chair, Uncle Frank. Sit in your big chair, and I'll sit in my little chair right side of you. There, that's it! Now I'll begin.

Well, you know, this summer, papa and mamma and I and Roy, — what did you say, — that I should have said, Roy and I? Well then, Roy and I, we all went to the sea-shore, — only papa just came down night times, — and we had a lovely time!

Now, nights, when I was ready for bed, and it wasn't rainy, mamma would wrap me up in her big shawl, and we'd look up at the pretty stars.

I love the stars, don't you?

Well, one night I looked up, and I saw

such a big star, and it nodded and nodded at me, just as if it was talking, and I said —

"See, mamma, see, that star is saying something to me, only I'm so far away I can't hear; I wish I could."

Mamma laughed and said, —

"You funny little girl, didn't you know stars were worlds, just like the earth?"

For three or four nights after that I watched my star, and it would nod and nod at me, and I would bow back.

One night, Uncle Frank, that star looked just as if it had been crying, all kind of hazy, you know; it would hardly look at me, and I felt bad, because that day had been one of my *drefff* days, nothing went right all day. Mamma said it was I who went wrong, and I said it was the day, and —

What makes you laugh, Uncle Frank?

Well, the night my star looked so sad, after mamma tucked me up in my bed, what *do* you think happened? Why, I heard such sweet, sweet music, and right in my room, close to my bed, were the prettiest lady I ever saw! She was dressed in white, and all over her dress were stars, and they shone just like that white stone in mamma's ring, — you know, the one papa gave her before they got married, — and on her head was a bright star too, and her hair was light, and it hung way down her dress, — like the girl's hair in that picture in our parlor, where the man is cutting it off, — and she had a lovely face, and she said, —

"Gertrude, I am your star, and I've come many miles to see you."

I tried to say, "I'm glad to see you," but I couldn't get the words out. And then she said, —

"You remember the piece you learned at school, the last one?"

I did, and it was about the angel. Do

you remember it, Uncle Frank? You don't!
Then listen :—

"Dear angel, ever at my side,
How loving thou must be!
To leave thy home in heaven,
To guard a little child like me."

"Well," said the star, "I'm your guardian angel, Gertrude. I watch you all the time, and try to keep you from doing wrong. When you are a good child, how pleased you make me! How brightly I shine! But when you do wrong, then my heart is sad, and my light is dim."

"Just as it was to-night?" I said.

"Yes, dear," said the star. "You will try to be a good child, and then you will keep me always bright and shining."

Then I promised, and the star-lady bent to kiss me; and I heard the sweet music, till it was way off, and way off, and I could hear it no more.

The next thing I remember it was morning, and I told all about the star to papa and mamma. Mamma said something about my being a strange child. I wonder why she said that.

Papa said, "You had a lovely dream, Gertrude. But did you know you *really* had two guardian angels, two star angels, dear? Look up into mamma's *eyes* and you will see them. Try to keep them bright, Gertrude, for if you are a naughty child they will surely grow dim."

Now, isn't that a pretty story, Uncle Frank? I shall try to keep my star angels bright.

If you ask what is the temper which is most fitted to be victorious over sin on earth, I answer that in it the warp of a sunny gentleness must be woven across the woof of a strong character. That will make the best tissue to stand the wear and tear of the world's trials.

For The Dayspring.

THE TELL-TALE.

Do you know, dear little children
That when you do a wrong,
The tell-tale face will show it,
Before the day is gone?

Or if you play the truant,—
When you go home at night,
The mother's eye will notice
That something is not right.

If you defraud a playmate,
Or lie or cheat or steal,
No little bird need tell it,—
The guilt you can't conceal.

If great or small the evil,
Some day it will crop out,
Perhaps not *all* the secret,
Or what it's all about;

But there will be the *something*
That follows guilt along.
The face is but a mirror
Reflecting every wrong.

So too when you are honest,
And try to do the right,
The tell-tale face will show it
By happy looks, and bright.

Now remember, little children,
In every act you do,—
In every great endeavor,—
Be upright, frank, and true.

AUNT CLARA.

NORTH ANDOVER, MASS.

SOCRATES, being asked the way to honest fame, said, "Study to be what you wish to seem."

It was a very pretty reply made by a little girl to the statement she heard uttered, that our Saviour was never seen to smile. "Didn't he say, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me'? And they would not have come unless he had smiled."

For The Dayspring.

"COMMONPLACES."

BY WALTER N. EVANS.



FEW years ago, men were astonished by the daring assertion that an electric cable could be laid across the Atlantic ocean, so that England and America could be in direct and instantaneous communication. After some ineffectual attempts, the cable was at length successfully laid; a message of congratulation passed from the Queen to the President; a reply from the President to the Queen; and then no more could be done with it. Enough, however, had been achieved to show that the scheme was practicable; other cables were laid, and now we have many deep-sea cables in different parts of the world. At first, as we considered the matter, all was wonder and amazement; and as the high cost prevented the use of the cable becoming general, the wonder continued for a long time. To-day, all business men who have transactions in Europe make constant use of this means of communication; so that it is now taken as "a matter of course," and sinks into the "commonplace." Still, when we come quietly to think about it, there is just as much reason for wonder to-day as ever there was; and whilst unthinking people are using it without reflection, some of the brightest minds of our times are still puzzling over it, and trying to learn about the nature of this Electricity, which sometimes exhibits its wonderful and resistless power in the thunderbolt, and at others is willing to run our messages over the hills and under the seas. To these *reflecting* minds it never can sink into the "commonplace."

It is not very long since we paid money to hear the wonderful working of the

newly discovered Telephone. The newspapers were full of it, and there was an article in one of our oldest established magazines, describing the instrument and its method of work, and concluding with the remark that it was a very wonderful toy, but could never be made practically useful. "All the world wondered" for a time; then the Telephone came into general use; and though we find it so convenient, and owe so much comfort to it (yes, and discomfort too), it has sunk into the "commonplace;" and superficial people turn aside from it and look out for the next wonder. But to the *thoughtful* mind it remains as wonderful as ever, and makes one more solid stepping-stone into the great museum of God's wonders, which are always greater and more numerous, the more we find out about them. To such persons it is not, nor can it ever be, "commonplace."

Two things have now been mentioned (and it would be easy to multiply examples) that began by being very wonderful; and then, whilst they remained wonderful to thinking people, became "commonplace" to the unthinking crowd; that is, they ceased to make them wonder and admire. The things remained just as they were. The change took place in the people. The novelty made them all *think* for a time; but when that was over the multitude became listless and too lazy to think any more about the matter.

About one hundred and thirty years ago, a rather delicate lad might have been seen, sitting evening after evening at tea with his aunt; and much trouble he gave her by meddling with the kettle. He would take off the lid, then put it on and press it down; hold a saucer or spoon in the steam that issued from the spout, and count the drops of water into which the steam

became condensed. That steam should come out of the kettle was the most natural thing in the world, — if the water were hot, steam *must* come out, — the aunt had known this all her life. What then could this troublesome and inquisitive boy be poring over this commonplace kettle for? But James Watt was a thoughtful boy, and from his observation of the tea-kettle, he was led to the invention of the steam-engine. The *unthinking* aunt found it “commonplace;” the *thinking* nephew found it the reverse.

To people who do not think, life is “commonplace” enough, — a worry and a weariness; sorrow oppresses, and pleasures cloy; and work is so hard and experience so painful. At school the teacher is so strict, and the lesson is so difficult, and the school-fellows are so selfish. At home, father is so occupied, and mother is so care-worn, and baby is so cross; and the town is so full of houses, and the country is so empty of them; and the weather is always fine, or wet, or windy, or something else; and one day is so much like another; and we never can do what we want to do; and, in fact, every thing is so “commonplace.” To the *thoughtful*, life is divine and full of grand opportunities: there is so much happiness; and sorrow and trial, when they come, are like the hills in the landscape; it is hard work to climb them, but how grand and extensive the view they make possible to us. To such, was there ever such a scene of man’s activity as the town; such a museum of God’s wonders as the country? And the school gives us the key whereby we may understand these wonders; and the teachers and school-mates are our helpers on the way; and if some are laboring under unpleasant experiences or painful disappointments, how sweet the opportunity we thus have of comforting

and encouraging them. And home! How can we ever tell half the joys to be found there; when father comes from the work and worry of the day, to find his rest in our bright and happy faces; when mother’s cares are lightened by her children’s ready hands and sympathizing hearts; where baby is everybody’s pet; and if he cries at all, it is only because he has not yet discovered that his brothers and sisters are making for him a home that is almost, if not quite, as happy as the heaven he has just left, where he had the angels for his playfellows!

The same rule applies when we leave the home and the school, and look at the business of life. Let us consider a carpenter. We will suppose that he is not a very thoughtful man; and so, year in and year out, he goes on sawing, and planing, and hammering; the wood remains wood to him, whether it be pine or walnut, mahogany or rosewood; his work soon becomes monotonous, “commonplace.” But suppose him to be a *thinking* carpenter; one with some touch of poetry in his soul. (Yes, that’s the point; poetry, like Aladdin’s lamp, turns all commonplace things into the beautiful; the poet is the prophet of to-day.) The thoughtful, poetic carpenter, as he lays his fingers upon the wood, finds rising in his soul visions of far-off lands, of Alpine hills and broad, blue rivers, of tropic fruits, and of almost arctic barrenness; he sees the swarthy Indian chasing the buffalo, or the black son of Africa, perhaps torn from his sunny home to be the slave of some hard-hearted white brother; but in all, whether the picture be dark or bright, or whether it is marked by shadows too deep for him to penetrate, he feels and sees that there is a good Father over all, who is ever creating and re-creating this beautiful world

and guiding all so as to bring about the kindest ends, thus educating the eternally beautiful out of the "commonplace." And he thus feels helped to do his work under the same Father's eye; and his materials are often transfigured before him, and become his helpers and guides into the higher life.

Do you say such carpenters are few? Perhaps so, because their education has been neglected. But there was once just such a carpenter; a good, earnest, thoughtful, pure, simple-minded man, who, as he worked, doing the very best that carpenter could do, thought of the history of his country, and considered the conditions of his countrymen and of all the world beside. And his workshop and his home spoke to him of God, and the windows of his soul were opened, and God's light and love came in, and he welcomed them, and nature all about him was full of God; and the fields and the flowers and the sparrows and the ravens, all spoke to him of the Father's love and care. And he filled men's minds with such a spirit too, that the birds and the flowers could preach to them; and all who listened to their sermons and to his explanation of them, began to feel that there was new meaning in their lives; and they longed to do something for the good God, no matter how small a thing, provided it was their *best*; and all things became grand and beautiful to them, and nothing seemed common or unclean. And that same carpenter can and will teach us to-day, if we will but learn; and he shows us how to lift every thing out of the "commonplace" into the beautiful!

"A commonplace life," we say, and we sigh;

But why should we sigh as we say!

The commonplace sun in the commonplace sky

Makes up the commonplace day;

The moon and the stars are commonplace things,

And the flower that blooms and the bird that sings.
But dark were the world, and sad our lot,
If the flowers failed, and the sun shone not.
And God, who studies each separate soul,
Out of commonplace lives makes his beautiful whole!

A BIG LOAD OF WOOD.

THE following description of what we will venture to call the biggest load of wood ever hauled, was recently communicated to the Boston "Daily Advertiser" by Mr. Charles Wellington Stone, of Cambridge:—

The Rev. Dr. Wellington was the old Templeton minister from early in the eighteen-hundreds, and Colonel Leonard Stone was one of his parishioners. It was the custom to supplement the minister's moderate salary with presents from the products of the farms, and specially with wood. Now, Colonel Leonard, one day in January, 1822, was drawing to the parsonage some of his nice hard wood. It was a good ox-load; two cords or so. As he was going across the Common with it, his brother, Colonel Ephraim, caught sight of him from the store, and was surprised at such a great load.

"Hello!" says he, "why don't you take your minister a load of wood while you're about it?"

"Now look here," says Colonel Leonard, "I've been sawing out lumber down't the mill, and there's any quantity of slabs. I'll give the minister as big a load as you can take."

Colonel Ephraim was a man for fun. He instigated the towns-people to take hold with him and accept his brother's challenge. First they made the sled. Long trees were cut for the runners. These were made thirty-odd feet long, and set eight feet apart. The body of the sled projected two feet over the runner on each side.

Thus the sled would hold twelve regular cords at one layer. There were two tongues, one in front of each runner.

On the appointed day the men and the oxen from all over town came to the meeting-place. The sled was taken to the saw-mill and backed up against the great pile. On went the slabs with a will. Colonel Leonard stood by, laughing, cheering, urging them along. When they had got on as much as they thought would do, they hitched up the team. *One hundred and sixty oxen*, four abreast, found it easy enough to pull. They had to go around through Baldwinville, because there was not room at the Otter River bridge for the sled to turn in. When they had got up on to the level ground above Baldwinville, they stopped and unhitched. Then with their every-day sleds they went back to the mill to bring more slabs and pile them on to the big load. This they kept up till there were no more slabs. Forty cords lay piled up on that sled. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

The next morning came the rest of the journey "up in town." The school-children were let out to see the great sight go by. One of them, to whose home it was going, says it looked as big as a house. It lay unloaded for quite a while out by the parsonage; and people came from near and from far to see. It kept Mr. Wellington in slabs for years to come.

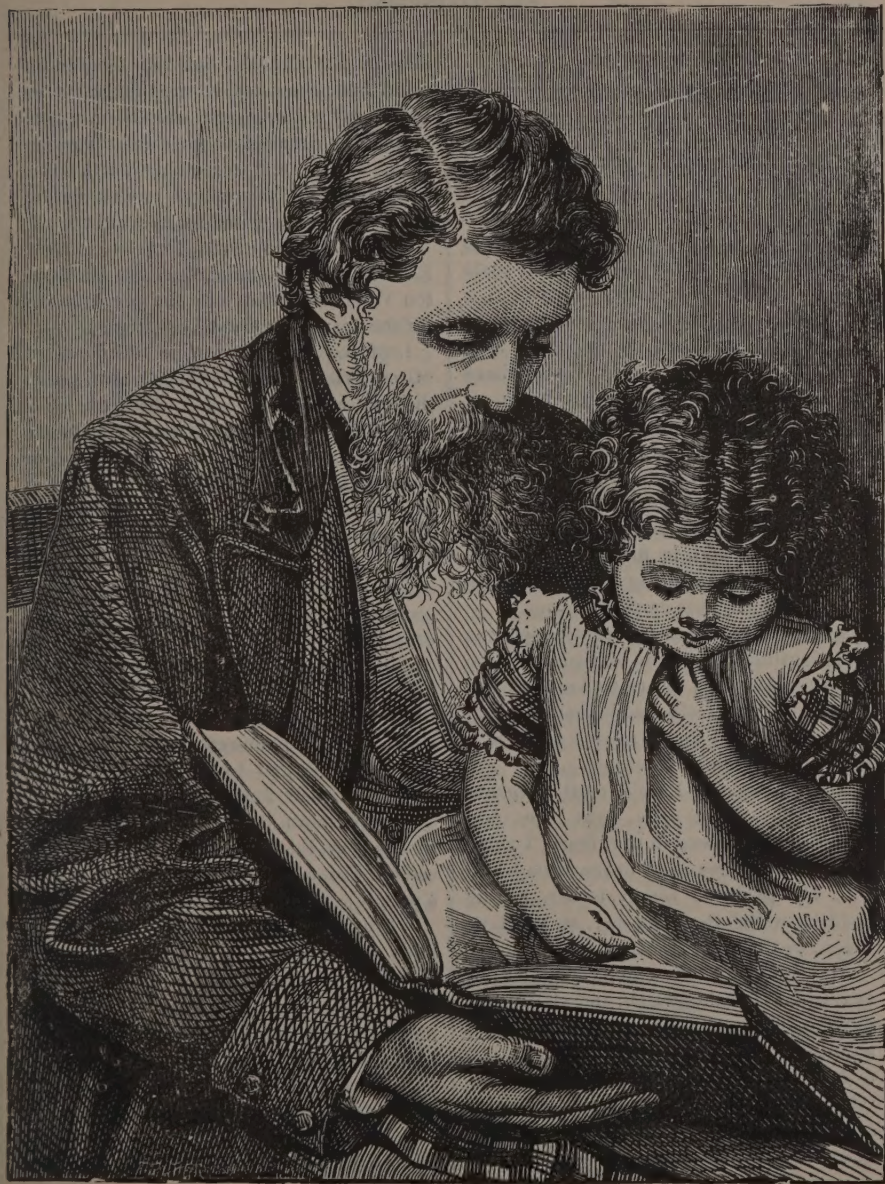
When the great sled was taken to pieces some of the timbers were used in building Mr. Winch's barn, and may be seen there in the framework until this day.

THE law of the harvest is to reap more than you sow. Sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

MARY AND HER FATHER.

THIS picture almost tells its own story. It is Sunday afternoon, and little Mary is sitting on her father's knee looking at pictures in the great Bible, and hearing the stories he has to tell. She loves to look at the picture of little Moses in the bulrushes, and hear how he was found by the king's daughter, and how wise and brave a man he became, and how he led his people out of Egypt. She loves to look at other pictures in this great Bible, and to hear her father tell other stories from it. She loves best of all to hear him tell the beautiful stories that Jesus told and how he went about doing good.

Every Sunday afternoon little Mary's father takes her on his knee just as you see in the picture. Sometimes he shows her pictures in other books than the Bible. He tells her, also, many beautiful stories besides those found there. Little Mary remembers the stories that are told her, and asks a great many questions about them. Her father answers her questions in a kind and patient way, for he is glad to see that his little daughter wants to learn all she can. Little Mary will become a wise and good woman, for her father tries to teach her and she tries to learn.



For The Dayspring.

THE DOLLS' WEDDING.

BY MRS. ANNIE D. DARLING.



H! Amy! you're a jewel! it will be just splendid! the only thing wanting to make my happiness complete would be to have the Square girls see it, but I s'pose they can't!"

Elsie did not refer to the particular shape of the girls mentioned, as might be supposed, but to a number of girls, sometimes playmates, who resided near her home, on Gladstone Square, who were blest with indulgent parents of large means, and who were looked up to, perhaps sometimes envied, by the younger portion of their neighbors, who saw them airing lovely dolls in sumptuous apparel, in fine perambulators, while their own modestly dressed Reginas and Seraphinas were carried in arms.

The plan now under consideration was so delightfully attractive to Elsie that she could not but wish others to know of her unusual felicity, feeling sure that even the "Square girls" would rejoice to have a share in the promised pleasure.

Amy Douglas, Elsie's most intimate friend and school-mate, was the only daughter of the sexton of "Great Trinity Church," and they lived in the same house with Mr. Monroe, Elsie's father, so the children were often together, at night as well as in the day.

Amy had proposed a dolls' wedding, to be celebrated in the church, and after many changes of plans, the arrangements were at last settled, and they were only sorry not to have the whole world know, and the "Square girls" present, to be dazzled by such an unusual proceeding, as Elsie said, but that was impossible.

Amy knew she would not be allowed to

play in the church, but the temptation could not be resisted, so she thought it as well to say nothing, and wait their opportunity; so arranged to go some afternoon to late service, and to remain after the congregation left, themselves leaving before the building was closed for the night.

Amy's doll, Victoria, was to marry Elsie's last acquisition, Algernon Harrington Vane, and great were the preparations for the auspicious event.

Lent having opened wide the doors of "Great Trinity" more frequently than usual, the day agreed on found the little girls within, one very pleasant afternoon, while the sun made silvery the white wings of the dove in the famous rose window, and paved the broad aisle with rainbows till one thought of the shining streets of the New Jerusalem.

The short service ended as evening shadows began to draw dusky veils over the deep corners of the large edifice, and the children, seated on hassocks in one of the high-walled pews, were unobserved in the dim light. The doors closed on the silent house, hallowed by prayer and praise, and, awed by its solemnity, they whispered their first words.

"Amy! ain't it still? I never noticed that text up there before, — 'Holiness Become Thine House.' Did you? Do you s'pose it's wicked for us to —"

"Why, Elsie, dear, of course not. Don't folks get married here every week, 'most? Oh! dear, I am afraid Victoria's veil is crushed, and her flounces, too; I had to put so much in my basket beside her! here's my books an' slate an' mittens, an' her opera cloak, 'cause I was afraid she'd get cold without it, and —"

"I had to jam poor Algernon awfully," said Elsie, taking off her hat, "and here's his hat, in the crown of mine. I couldn't

get that in the bag, and I 'most laughed, it bobbed about so every time I moved my head, but I hated to spoil it." And Elsie, pushing aside unwelcome thought, trying not to feel the pricking of the true needle of conscience within, gaining courage, as she saw Amy's ease of mind and manner, went on quickly with her preparations, laughing softly as she saw the bewitching bride.

As her laugh echoed through the building's hush, Amy started, looking up quickly, as if she thought the angels grouped at the beautiful windows, gazing tenderly through the tinted air, might be surprised at sounds of levity in that, their dwelling place, but they made no sign, yet she thought they looked much more alive, somehow, than she ever saw them before; and the illuminated words, on a background blue as the summer sky, shone out like the sun at midday to her searching sight, — "The Lord is in His Holy Temple;" and she spoke a little lower as she begged Elsie to hasten her motions.

When all was in readiness, the dolls were arranged at the altar, and Amy read the service, or such parts of it as seemed desirable, while Elsie wiped away a few unseen tears, as she had seen mothers do when their daughters had been given in marriage, sitting in the front pew, where she did her best to represent the whole family.

It seemed quite real to the children for the time being, though they felt sorry the affair was so private; but they imagined all that was wanting, and conversed with multitudes of friends supposed to be present, while the invisible company awaited the carriages that were to take them to a square pew near the door, supposed to be the residence of the bride. The banquet, consisting of a cracker, two almonds, an

apple, and a piece of orange peel, which were all the luncheon baskets could furnish, was, by the power of imagination, converted into a regal repast, and all went "merry as a marriage bell" till the increasing darkness startled the festive pair.

Amy dropped her almond, and could not see to find it, and exclaimed, "Why, how dark it is! I guess we had better go, Elsie."

Elsie agreed, and hurriedly placed the shining beaver of the bridegroom in the crown of her own brown felt, and hustled that elegant young man ruthlessly into her basket, without the care his habiliments demanded. "It must be late! I'm afraid the lamps will be lighted. Let's hurry. Be quick, Amy!"

They expected to leave the church through a vestry-room door, often used by the sexton, and left unfastened when the furnaces were used, as Amy's brother came in that way, on his way home from the store at night, to look after the fires. When they reached the door it was locked, and the key withdrawn.

Both little faces turned pale, but each tried to make the best of the matter.

Said Amy, "How strange that father should have locked the door, when Charlie has to come in to see to the furnaces. Now he'll have to go way home and come back, just for that key."

And Elsie answered stoutly, "Well, as we can't go just yet, we may as well play a little longer."

As the dolls were all packed away, on second thought it seemed as well to let them enjoy in peace the journey they were supposed to be taking, and the little girls amused themselves with closing all the pew doors which were left open; then it grew so dark they sat down on the steps at the chancel rail, and a silence fell that

somewhat saddened their light hearts; sober thought came softly, and whispered subtle fears, and the monitor within stirred uneasily, and Elsie put her arm around Amy, who kissed her lovingly. and asked, "You're not frightened, Elsie dear, are you?"

Elsie was going to answer, "No, indeed!" but her eyes fell on the marble font, gleaming white in the darkness, and remembering how she had seen the sign of the cross placed on many a baby brow, in the holy rite of baptism, the spirit of truth moved her heart, and she faltered a quaking admission that "she was a little."

Amy was about to make a bold stand to comfort and encourage her friend, when the bell in the great tower struck, with a loud clang, the measured beat of a fire alarm; and, as the echoes shivered down through the darkness, the children held each other in a close embrace, their hearts throbbing with fear, while their teeth chattered with cold and excitement.

After repeated visits to the doors and windows, which were found to be securely closed, they sat, with arms entwined, through longer hours than they had ever known before.

A little storm of tears and screams, all unheard by the busy world outside the heavy doors, relieved their strained nerves and wearied them into a degree of composure. Reflection came, as the din, muffled as it was by distance, died with the day, and the perfect peace of night descended.

They whispered their thankfulness that no others of their companions were with them in their misery, Elsie saying heartily, "What a mercy that the Square girls, not one of them, even, could come!" and confessed her belief that it had been wrong

to bring dolls and play into God's hallowed house.

"But we didn't think," said Elsie, who blamed herself, but who loved Amy too well to lay any blame on her.

"No," replied Amy; "Mother says that's just my fault, my trouble 'most always, — *I don't think!*" and, after talking it over awhile, they kneeled at the chancel rail, confessing their fault, and asked forgiveness, and were somewhat calmed and comforted.

"Father will certainly come in the morning," said Amy, "for Mrs. Benton's husband is going to be buried, so we'll get out sometime; and oh! *ain't* we hungry?"

"But how can we wait till funeral time?" asked Elsie, "they're never buried till afternoon. We'll starve!" and the tears rolled down over a pale little face.

"I'll tell you!" exclaimed Amy, jumping up and clapping her hands joyfully, "let's find our way to the belfry, and hang out a signal of distress, as they do when folks get shipwrecked."

"Where will you get a signal," asked Elsie, "we've got distress enough, but where's your flag?"

"Oh! come along and see," said Amy bravely, and as the dawn was reddening the cold, gray, eastern sky, the children stumbled up the dark, steep stairs, and, tying together veils, tippets, handkerchiefs, and what ribbons they could gather from braids and dresses, they floated their signal from between the slats of the belfry's blinds. Patiently waiting, till the cold was too intense to be borne any longer, they fastened it there, and went down again, chilled, but hopeful.

Good Dr. Ransom, rector of "Great Trinity," opening the library window at

the parsonage, looked out at the beauties of early morning. He was an early riser, and welcomed the sun's first rays. His eye fell on a waving, twisting line of various colors streaming from a blind in the belfry tower of the church across the way. Unable to make it seem like any thing entangled by telegraph lines, as he at first thought, he scanned curiously the pennant that was telling its story to the unheeding world below.

He could not make it out, nor could he give it up; so he put on hat and overcoat, and sped quickly to the sexton's house, saying, as he met Mr. Douglas at the door, "You'll think me foolish, Douglas, but there's a queer thing flowing from the belfry of the church that I never noticed before, and that has excited my curiosity. Why won't you bring the keys, or give them to me, and I'll go up and see what it is?"

"I would in a minute, Doctor, — wait, I'll give you the keys, — but my little girl's lost, and Monroe's girl's with her, we think, and I've been out all night, looking for them, and we're just going — but I hardly know *what* to do, we're so distressed?"

"Why, man! why didn't you come and tell me of your trouble, and let me help?" said the whole-souled minister. "Look here! perhaps they are in the church! have you been there? Come, quick!"

And so deliverers were brought by the "signal of distress," and deliverance came none too soon, for the children were quite exhausted by fright, fatigue, cold, and hunger.

Kind words warmed them to life and joy again, and loving hearts forgave their thoughtlessness. The holy words of the texts first brought home to their hearts that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon, with others,

similar, that they looked out together in after days, had for them a deep significance, and many precious lessons were learned from that one memory of the dolls' wedding.

For The Dayspring.

A LESSON TAUGHT BY A CAT.

BY EGBERT L. BANGS.

ONE afternoon in December, just between daylight and dark, a little boy was lying on the lounge in the dining-room.

It was a bitterly cold day. There was no light in the room, and it was too dark for any thing but pleasant conversation, which is often more enjoyable at that hour than any other. Kitty — and a very large kitty she was — had just been let into the house, and she walked straight to the lounge where the little boy was. They are great friends. In a moment he had her in his arms, and, as she lay down snugly by him, began to stroke her back.

"O papa, see here!" said he. "Just see the sparks fly!"

Never before had he witnessed this beautiful experiment. It was a new revelation to him. Each time that he passed his hand over pussy's thick, heavy, but exceedingly fine fur, a sharp, crackling sound followed.

"Just lay your hand on her head," said he.

I did so, and, as the sparks flew once more, I could feel a slight electric shock trembling through my fingers. How often do little children look with wonder and with fear upon the blinding flashes of lightning that they see from their beds some dark, stormy night. Recently I received a telegram. A dear friend had suddenly died. Many, many miles that

message was sent to me by lightning, for electricity and lightning are the same. Is it not strange that lightning, in small globes, not half so large as the lamp of a fire-fly, can be set flashing upon the back of a cat! Can you start it in summer? No, you must wait till cold weather.

"But what makes such a difference between summer and winter, papa?" said the boy on the lounge. "Why don't we have lightning in winter, and why don't the cat's back give sparks when you rub it in summer?"

I wonder how many boys there are who can answer that question.

Papa proceeded to explain the mystery. He said there is always electricity in the air. But if there is just as much in one place as there is in another, you don't see it jumping about in its red clothes. Now, damp air is a good conductor of electricity. In summer the vapors that arise from the rivers and lakes and the great old ocean form many clouds. They are rolled about in the sky by the wind, and, as some of them contain more electricity than others, the lightning leaps from one to the other, trying all the time to keep itself equally distributed among them. The thunder is only another way of saying, "Let us keep things even." In winter, when the sun has little power to raise vapors, there is less moisture in the atmosphere, and the clouds are spread almost as evenly over the sky as grass that is dropped by a mowing machine is spread over the meadow. But in summer the clouds are piled up like haystacks, and sometimes like stacks or even like hills here and there in the sky. To get the electricity even, therefore, it must have a big jumping-time once in a while, and that is what we call a thunder-storm.

"But," said the little boy, "why don't

we see sparks when we rub the cat's back in summer?"

"Because," was the answer, "in summer the air is full of moisture, and that conducts away the electricity from the fur, while in winter it accumulates and cannot pass off. Your hand is a conductor, and it passes into that as you rub her back."

"Well, pussy," said the little boy, "you have taught me a lesson about electricity, and now you shall have a saucer of milk, and then you must go to bed."

SMALL ECONOMIES.

MR. FAWCETT has just introduced into the British Parliament a bill authorizing postmasters to issue blank forms, containing twelve spaces, each the size of a penny stamp. Any person or child returning these forms filled with stamps shall be credited in the postal savings bank to the amount of a sixpence. Mr. Fawcett's object is to encourage the very poorest and youngest of the Queen's subjects to save.

A penny anybody can save, and once invested in a stamp, it cannot be laid out: the owner becomes a bank depositor. Mr. Fawcett, as our readers will recollect, is the blind member of Parliament, whose great personal misfortunes in life and triumph over them by dint of sound common sense have made him quick to apply practical common sense to the misfortunes of others.

Postal and children's savings banks are in use in most of the enlightened countries of Europe. In one of the arrondissements of France alone the number of children depositors reached last year over twenty-four thousand. These belonged, as a rule, to the poorer classes.

It is the habit of economy thus incul-

cated in children which is of value, not the actual amount saved. It becomes an ineradicable part of the character of the future man. The same economical training is given the German, Scotch, and Scandinavian children.

Hence the men of these nations, when they come to this country, where all races join in the struggle for success, almost invariably win; while the American, with probably twice their mother-wit, and with the advantage of being on his own ground, is too often shoved to the wall. This country is enormously rich. It is perhaps natural that its sons should become spendthrifts. There is no need that they should become misers and hoard their pennies.

But a boy should be taught from the first day he handles money at once its vast powers and its weakness. He should be made to realize that it is given to him for better uses than to fling away in the vain attempt to gain distinction by the vulgar display of wealth. The boy who has been taught the real place of money in the enginery of life will as a man neither hoard nor squander it. — *Youth's Companion*.

EVERY one on earth should be,
 Busy as the honey-bee;
 Active, lively all the day,
 Working in a useful way,
 It will always give us joy,
 Time to actively employ.

By going out a few minutes sooner or later, by stopping to speak with a friend at a corner, by meeting this man or that, or by turning down this street instead of the other, we may let slip some great occasion of good, or avoid some impending evil, by which the whole current of our lives would have been changed. There is no possible solution to the dark enigma but the one word, — "Providence." — *Longfellow*.

LITTLE CROSSES.

VEXING little trials
 Often hedge our way,
 Little calls for patience
 Meet us every day.

Yet we always rule them;
 With our chosen mood
 They may work us evil,
 Or may do us good.

If we meet them fretting,
 Into griefs they swell;
 But they turn to blessing,
 If we bear them well.

The Well-Spring.

A LITTLE GIRL'S SACRIFICE.

THE following beautiful story of a little girl who burned her toys to keep her sick parents from freezing, was sent by telegraph from Kingston, N. Y., early in February, and published in some of the daily newspapers: —

Away back in the wildest part of this county, among the mountains and forests of the sparsely settled town of Hardenburg, a place it takes a week to communicate with, lives little Nellie Osborn, a child of six years. Her father and mother were both suddenly stricken with fever, being unable to leave their beds. Living in an isolated place, far from neighbors, and being scantily supplied with the necessities of life at this severe and inclement season, with snow lying three or four feet deep everywhere, the situation may be imagined. Little Nellie did what she could to alleviate the sufferings of her parents in every way. It was bitter cold, their rude little house offered poor resistance to the winds, the bed-covering was not abundant, and the supply of firewood finally gave out. The little girl took her wooden playthings, and tried to keep the fire going with them.

Then she kneeled by the couch of her sick mother and prayed: "Please, dear Lord, send a big, good man to help us." Help came in the person of James McGavitt, a lumberman of the mountains, who found the family in the condition stated, and afforded prompt relief. Little Nellie became sick with the fever afterward. Assistance has now been offered by a charitable lady of Irvington, whose sympathy was excited by the child's sacrifice of her toys.

HUMOROUS.

A TALKATIVE girl often annoyed her mother by making remarks about visitors that came to the house. On one occasion a gentleman was expected, whose nose had been by some accident flattened nearly to his face. The mother cautioned her child beforehand to say nothing about this peculiarity. Imagine her consternation when the little one exclaimed in the gentleman's presence: "Ma! you told me not to say any thing about Mr. Smith's nose; why, he hasn't got any!"

A little girl once said that she would be glad to go to heaven because they have plenty of preserves there. On being cross-examined, she took down her catechism and triumphantly read: "Why ought the saints to love God?" Answer: "Because he makes preserves, and keeps them."

Ethel, a very little girl, is sent to one of the schools where words and their meanings are taught by descriptions of common objects and by the application of terms to things which the pupils may see. When she came home the first day she examined her baby-brother critically as he lay in his cradle, and said, "Mother, Fred's oblong and horizontal, ain't he?"

Puzzles.

ENIGMA NO. 1.

I am composed of eighteen letters.

My 2, 3, is a pronoun.

My 18, 8, 9, 4, is a number.

My 1, 6, 13, 14, is a verb.

My 10, 17, 5, 15, is another verb.

My 11, 12, 7, is a small cake.

My 16, 15, 9, is a number.

My whole is the name of a Providence daily paper.

L. B. S.

ENIGMA NO. 2.

I am composed of thirteen letters.

My 9, 8, 12, is something to carry liquids in.

My 5, 2, 3, is not old.

My 1, 4, 5, 6, is a verb.

My 7, 11, 12, 13, is a personal pronoun.

My 10, 2, 3, is to cut.

My whole is a useful family article.

GERTIE L. (11 years old.)

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE FEBRUARY NUMBER.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

London.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

M il L

A lib I

D res S

R o B

I ndig O

D o N

PUZZLE.

Car-a-van.

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